

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAR ES 02161 201040Z
ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
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USICA FOR PGM/RC, AF

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, CG, US, FR, BE, TZ
SUBJ: TANZANIAN PRESS COVERAGE OF WESTERN INTERVENTION IN SHABA

1. BOTH DAR ES SALAAM DAILIES, GOVERNMENT-OWNED DAILY NEWS
AND PARTY-OWNED UHURU, GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE MAY 20 TO
WESTERN INTERVENTION IN SHABA. THERE WERE NO EDITORIALS.

2. UNDER FULL-PAGE HEADLINE, "FRANCE INTERVENES", DAILY NEWS
REPORTED THAT FRENCH TROOPS WERE ENGAGED IN COMBAT IN ADDITION
TO TRYING TO RESCUE FOREIGNERS IN KOLWEZI, DESPITE EXPLANATION
OF FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER DE GUIRINGAUD THAT
FRENCH INTERVENTION ONLY A RESCUE ATTEMPT. APPARENT "STRAINED
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RELATIONS" BETWEEN BELGIANS AND FRENCH OVER FRENCH ALLEGED
JUMPING THE GUN ON JOINT OPERATIONS WERE REPORTED. ARTICLE ALSO
MENTIONED ANNOUNCEMENT BY PRESIDENT CARTER THAT HE HAD ORDERED
AIRLIFT OF UP TO 17.5 MILLION DOLLARS IN NON-LETHAL MILITARY
AND OTHER EQUIPMENT TO ZAIRE AND THAT MORE WOULD BE SENT LATER.
DE GUIRINGAUD QUOTED AS STATING FRENCH INTERVENTION OCCURED
"IN COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WHICH PROVIDED THE

MEANS OF TRANSPORT."

3. DAILY NEWS ALSO REPORTED REMARKS BY FNLC CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER JEAN-BAPTISTE MPONDO IN BRUSSELS THAT FNLC WOULD FIGHT AGAINST FRENCH AND BELGIAN PARATROOPERS, WHO WOULD BE CONSIDERED AS MOBUTU'S "MERCENARIES." MPONDO WAS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID ZAIRE GOVERNMENT WAS PREVENTING FNLC'S PLANNED EVACUATION OF FOREIGNERS FROM KOLWEZI BY REPEATED AERIAL BOMBING. MPONDO REPORTEDLY SAID ZAIRE GOVERNMENT WANTED TO KEEP FOREIGNERS IN KOLWEZI TO JUSTIFY FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION, "WITHOUT WHICH THE ZAIRE ARMY WILL BE FINISHED."

4. UHURU GAVE MORE ATTENTION TO MPONDO'S REMARKS AND TO DETAILS OF WESTERN INTERVENTION. ARTICLE GAVE IMPRESSION THAT THERE WAS A MASSIVE WESTERN PLAN TO SAVE MOBUTU'S REGIME BY DEFEATING HIS ENEMIES. UHURU ADVERTISED MPONDO'S CLAIMS THAT FNLC HAD KILLED 800 FRENCH PARATROOPERS AT KOLWEZI. ARTICLE CLAIMED THAT UP TO MAY 19 SOME 3000 BELGIAN AND FRENCH TROOPS WERE ENGAGED AT KOLWEZI. ARRIVAL OF MPQNUPP ADDITIONAL BELGIAN SOLDIERS AT KAMINA ALSO REPORTED. UHURU REPORTED DE GUIRINGAUD AS SAYING THAT BELGIUM AND FRANCE HAD INTERVENTED TO HELP MOBUTU PUT DOWN THE FORCES OPPOSING HIM. DE GUIRINGAUD ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT US, UK, AND OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAD ALSO AGREED TO HELP. UHURU MENTIONED USE OF SEVEN US MILITARY LOCKHEED C-141S IN CARRYING FUEL, WEAPONS, AND TROOPS FROM BELGIUM TO SHABA.
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5. COMMENT: ABSENCE OF EDITORIAL COMMENT THUS FAR PROBABLY ATTRIBUTABLE IN PART TO TANGOV TRYING TO MESH ITS VIEWS ON VARIOUS ISSUES INVOLVED E.G. TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, OPPOSITION TO MOBUTU REGIME, MILITARY INTERVENTION BY EX-COLONIAL POWERS. NOTABLE THAT SO FAR LOCAL PRESS COVERAGE HAS NOT HIGHLIGHTED U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THIS OPERATION.
WALKER

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